

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the instant application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of providing a call waiting notification to a participant in an existing telephone call, comprising the steps of:

providing a Web-enabled interface through which ~~said participant~~ a telephone subscriber can associate distinctive ~~ring tones~~ call waiting tones with calling parties, wherein each of the distinctive call waiting tones is a subscriber selected call waiting tone assigned to said calling parties, wherein the subscriber selects the call waiting tone via said Web-enabled interface over an Internet connection;

receiving from a calling party, over a telephony connection, call information comprising a specified telephone number of ~~[[the]]~~ a participant in ~~[[the]]~~ an existing telephone call and at least one of a user name and password, wherein said participant is said subscriber;

identifying said calling party using said call information; and

causing a distinctive call waiting tone to be sent to said participant wherein said distinctive call waiting tone is associated with said calling party, and wherein said participant previously associated said distinctive call waiting tone ~~was associated~~ with said calling party via said Web-enabled interface.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said call information identifies said call as out-of-area code with respect to said participant.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of receiving subscriptions to a call waiting service, and verifying said call waiting subscription when said call is received by a call waiting service provider.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing a list to said calling party of available call waiting messages, receiving from said calling party a selection of a message, and sending a distinctive call waiting tone to said participant according to said selection.

7. (Currently Amended) A system for providing a call waiting notification to a participant in an existing telephone call, comprising:

a Web-enabled interface through which ~~said participant~~ a telephone subscriber can associate distinctive call waiting tones ~~ring tones~~ with calling parties, wherein each of the distinctive call waiting tones is a subscriber selected call waiting tone assigned to said calling parties, wherein the subscriber selects the call waiting tone via said Web-enabled interface over an Internet connection;

a call waiting service provider configured to receive a call from a calling party and receive call information comprising a specified telephone number of ~~[[the]]~~ a participant in ~~[[the]]~~ an existing telephone call and at least one of a username and password to identify the calling party, wherein said participant is said subscriber;

a distinctive call waiting tone generator configured to generate distinctive call waiting tones based upon said calling party; and,

a switch for transferring said received call to the participant if the participant elects to accept the received call.

8. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 7, wherein said call waiting service provider further comprises a database comprising authorized passwords, and a data processing system for verifying a password received from said calling party by comparing said password to said database of passwords.

9. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 7, further comprising a table of available call waiting messages, and a data processing system for receiving from said calling party a selection of a message, and for assigning a call waiting tone according to said selection.

10. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 7, further comprising a data processing system for receiving call information from said calling party, and for sending a distinctive call waiting tone to said participant according to said call information.

11. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 10, wherein said call information identifies said calling party as being out-of-area code with respect to said participant, and said system sends a distinctive call waiting tone to indicate to said participant that said calling party is out-of-area code.

12. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 10, wherein said call information further comprises at least one selected from [[the]]_a group consisting of out-of-area code, time of day at point of origin, geographical location, and time zone information.

13. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 7, wherein said system comprises a database comprising subscription information, and a data processing system for comparing said call information received from said calling party to said subscription information in said database.

14. (Currently Amended) A system for providing a call waiting notification to a participants in an existing telephone call, comprising:

a Web-enabled interface through which ~~said participant~~ a telephone subscriber can associate distinctive call waiting tones ~~ring tones~~ with calling parties, wherein each of the distinctive call waiting tones is a subscriber selected call waiting tone assigned to said calling parties, wherein the subscriber selects the call waiting tone via said Web-enabled interface over an Internet connection;

fixed data storage for storing a list of call characteristics for said calling parties, wherein said call characteristics comprise at least one of a user name and password;

a call analyzer for obtaining call characteristics for received calls, wherein said call analyzer identifies a caller based upon said call characteristics;

a call waiting tone generator for producing distinctive call waiting tones according to said caller, and,

a tone transmitter for sending said distinctive call waiting tones to said ~~participants~~ subscriber when said subscriber is a participant in an existing telephone call.

15. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 14, wherein said call characteristics include at least one selected from ~~[[the]]~~ a group consisting of out-of-area code, time of day at point of origin, geographical location, and time zone characteristics.

16. (Original) The system of claim 14, further comprising structure for selecting said call characteristics from a menu of available call characteristics.

17-18. (Canceled)

19. (Original) The system of claim 14, further comprising password verification structure.

20. (Currently Amended) A method for providing a call waiting notification to a participant in a telephone call, comprising the steps of:

providing a Web-enabled interface through which ~~said participant~~ a telephone subscriber can associate distinctive ~~ring tones~~ call waiting tones with callers, wherein each of the distinctive call waiting tones is a subscriber selected call waiting tone assigned to said calling parties, wherein the subscriber selects the call waiting tone via said Web-enabled interface over an Internet connection;

storing a list of call characteristics;

obtaining call characteristics comprising a specified telephone number of [[the]] a participant in [[the]] a telephone call and at least one of a user name and password for an inbound call, wherein said participant is said subscriber;

comparing said call characteristics for said inbound call to said list of call characteristics to identify a caller placing said inbound call;

generating a call waiting tone according to the caller; and

sending said call waiting tone to said participant.

21. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 20, wherein said call characteristics for said inbound call and said call characteristics to identify a caller placing said inbound call include at least one selected from [[the]] a group consisting of out-of-area code, time of day at point of origin, geographical location, and time zone characteristics.

22. (Original) The method of claim 20, further comprising the step of creating said list of call characteristics.

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23. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein said step of creating said list of call characteristics comprises the step of selecting call characteristics from a menu of available call characteristics.

24-25. (Canceled)

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising responsive to the participant electing to speak with said calling party, connecting said calling party and participant.